

Solarpunk Computer/Communication Networks

What does the internet look like in the solarpunk future? For a brief while there, the Internet as we knew it fit pretty well -

Changing the underlying technology certainly isn't a guarantee that people will be better behaved, or that convenience, security, and liability can't cause some centralization. It's quite possible these systems will remain a sort of side note beside the

Just the same, I've gathered up a few examples which might give you some inspiration:

Meshnets

Meshtastic/Meshcore

These meshnets use inexpensive LoRa radios to run long-range off-grid communication platforms. Basically you set up these small radio devices, some of which look like a microchip with an antenna attached, others of which look like small walkie talkies, and use them to send texts (usually by connecting them to a cell phone or similar). There's a ton of interesting things you can do with the network as long as you can do it by sending short text messages. People run Internet of Things -style devices using these networks, they set up Tile-style trackers with small GPS-enabled chips that shout out their location on the meshnet, there's all kinds of stuff. But it's not equivalent to the internet - you can't set up and visit web sites or anything like that.

How they work:

This is obviously going to be an extremely simple summary because I'm a writer with a very light technical background. The big thing is that these networks don't use traditional infrastructure when relaying these text messages. There's no 'backbone' of cell towers, underground fiber lines, datacenters, or any of that. The node you're using to send is both the endpoint for your communications and the backbone for somebody else's. When someone sends a message all the other nodes in range see it and use a preprogrammed logic (different between meshtastic and meshcore) to decide who re-broadcasts it and who doesn't.

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